

Edward Hines Jr. VA Hospital

# HINES HERO

*Serving with Pride*

April/May 2014

Official Newsletter of the Edward Hines Jr. VA Hospital

Vol. 1, Issue 4





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## The Hero

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# COMMENTARY

## Message from the Secretary: 2014 Asian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month



Each year, we set aside the month of May to honor and celebrate Asian and Pacific Islander Americans and their immense contributions to our way of life. Those contributions reflect the vibrancy of cultures that originate in a vast geography that is diverse, exotic, and brilliant in color.

The sheer size of the Asia-Pacific region, some 40 nations, makes it impossible to acknowledge appropriately each of its fascinating cultures in a single observance. With some exceptions, they are people of color, and because island communities predominate, many know the Pacific Ocean intimately. Yet, many others find their roots in the cultures of two of the world's most populous nations—China and India—where large populations never see the ocean in their lifetimes. Asian and Pacific Islander Americans come from tribes, kingdoms, empires, democracies—and, yes, from nations with oppressive regimes that drove the unbowed to our shores, where freedom and liberty beckoned.

With them came their love of music and dance, their dress, cuisine, art, languages, and the love of family. Their customs span social structures—from stone-age tribes to space-age societies. Some islanders were voyagers, both for commerce and curiosity. They perfected the art of navigating without instruments, using instead the currents, stars, and the wind to guide and propel them across broad reaches of the Pacific. Even today, mariners and helmsmen have barely deciphered their methods.

They were courageous beyond imagination, drawn into the swirl of human migration simply by the promise of opportunity. Venturing beyond their communities was a search for better lives for themselves and, more importantly, their children. Those who made the original journeys left behind what little security they had—family, friends, work, property, perhaps little more than a hut on a small patch of land. They worked hard to fulfill the dreams of better futures for their children. To their disappointment, some children, all too soon, found customs and traditions less important, and elders worried that if all culture were lost, their identities as a people would not be far behind—that sense of who they are, where they came from. So, celebrating heritage months like this one rekindles in important ways memories of a vibrant past.

Today, over 15 million Americans identify themselves as Asian or Pacific Islanders—some 315,000 of them are Veterans. Over 101,000 Asian and Pacific Islanders wear the military uniforms of our Nation, and more than 45,000 of those were not born here. Among VA's ranks, more than 25,000 of our colleagues are of Asian or Pacific Islander descent, and nearly 3,500 of them are Veterans themselves.

With great pride, I join the Department of Veterans Affairs in honoring our Veterans and all our citizens of Asian and Pacific Islander descent and thank them for keeping our country the beacon of democracy and promise for those still hungering for opportunity.

*Eric K. Shinseki*  
Secretary of Veterans Affairs



### On the cover:

Hines Employee and Marine Corps Veteran Michael Norman, from Escort Service, escorts Army Veteran Bill Ally to his destination at Hines VAH.  
(Photo by Dan DuVerney, Hines Media Service)



# TUG Robots Improve Efficiency at Hines VAH

By **Charity Hardison**  
*Hines VAH Public Affairs*

This year, Hines VAH began using robotic couriers, known as TUGs, with much success.

Developed by Pittsburgh-based Aethon, the TUG robots haul carts throughout Hines, delivering medical and pharmaceutical supplies.

“TUGs have been a proven asset to hospitals around the country, and we are happy to have them in use here at Hines” said Tom Huettemann, Hines’ Chief Logistics Officer. “The TUG robots use ‘laser whiskers’ to avoid obstacles and humans, wirelessly open doors and call for elevators.”

Within the first two months of running, the TUGs covered more than 365 miles while delivering to more than 100 locations, allowing for increased efficiency and quality of products being delivered.

“Anywhere you need something to go, the TUG can take it there,” said Huettemann. “The TUGs will soon be delivering meals to our patients as well.”

Because the TUGs use some of the same passageways as Hines employees and patients, Huettemann and his team selected

particular routes of travel and operating hours for the robots.

“We selected the most efficient travel routes, and we operate the TUGs primarily during non-peak hours,” said Huettemann. The TUGs travel on the elevators as well, and Hines staff, patients and visitors should be aware that the TUGs need to travel in the elevators alone because of their required maneuvers.

“The TUG is automatically programmed to call for the elevator,” said Huettemann. “During these times, the TUG takes complete control of the elevator by slowly approaching and making its way into the elevator. The TUG must maneuver itself into the elevator and make a complete U-turn to position itself for an exit. For this reason, we ask that people not attempt to get on the elevator with the TUG because it will sense they are nearby and will stop what it is doing for safety reasons. This will prevent the elevator from moving. The TUG will stop its approach if someone is waiting to travel from floor to floor.”

Huettemann hopes the Hines staff will help with naming the TUGs.

“We want to name each of the TUGs, so if any Hines staff has suggestions I’d like them to send their ideas my way.”



*A TUG robot travels through the hallways of Hines to deliver supplies. Hines began using TUG robots this year, and the TUGs have traveled nearly 400 miles on campus.*

# Hines Social Worker Competes in Triathlon

By **William Baxter, Social Worker**  
*Hines VAH*

A Hines VAH employee recently competed in her sixth Triathlon in Hawaii on March 30.

Katherine Gemmell, a social worker in the Hines Homeless Program, competed in the Lavaman Triathlon, which is an Olympic-distance triathlon consisting of a .9-mile swim in Anaehoʻomalū Bay, followed by a 24.8-mile bike ride along the Queen Kaʻahumanu Highway, ending with a 6.2-mile run through the grounds of the Waikaloa Resort.

“I originally started racing triathlon with Team In Training, an organization that works with the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society to fund cancer research and provide financial assistance to current patients,” said Gemmell. “I did my first two Lavaman events with them as well as an event in Washington, D.C. After moving from the San Diego area, I continued

to compete on my own. This triathlon was my fourth competition on the Lavaman course and sixth race overall.”

With a personal best time of 3:00:56, Gemmell placed 16th in her age group, coming in 7th in her favorite event, the swim.

Two days after the Lavaman Triathlon, Gemmell completed in the bike course for the Ironman Triathlon World Championship, finishing in just over eight hours. This 112-mile bike course in Kona, Hawaii included more than 4,500 feet of total positive vertical elevation gain.

“Competing has made a very positive impact on my life,” said Gemmell. “I have been able to focus more on my overall health. I also use triathlon as my primary source of self-care. It has become such a large part of my life at this point that it’s honestly hard to imagine a time where I won’t be racing. Triathlon also allows me to travel to places I’ve never been and meet people that I am very close to after



*Hines Social Worker Kathleen Gemmell competed in the Lavaman Triathlon and the bike course of the Ironman Triathlon World Championship in Hawaii.*

connecting through the sport.”

Gemmell said the perseverance required in a triathlon also helps her in her work with Veterans.

“The connection between my work and

**SEE “TRIATHLON” ON PAGE 8**

# New Service Chiefs Appointed to Leadership

**Denise Van Koevering**  
Chief,  
Blind Rehabilitation Center



Denise Van Koevering was appointed Chief of Blind Rehabilitation Center here at Hines, effective March 23.

**Dr. Martin Gorbien**  
Associate Chief of Staff,  
Geriatrics and Long Term  
Care Service



Dr. Martin Gorbien was appointed Associate Chief of Staff, Geriatrics and Long Term Care Service here at Hines, effective April 7.

**Dr. Anna Stachyra**  
Chief,  
Education Service



Dr. Anna Stachyra was appointed Chief of Education Service here at Hines, effective May 1.

# Survey: Veterans Highly Satisfied with VA Care

WASHINGTON -- The American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI), an independent customer service survey, ranks the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) customer satisfaction among Veteran patients among the best in the nation and equal to or better than ratings for private sector hospitals. The 2013 ACSI report assessed satisfaction among Veterans who have recently been patients of VA’s Veterans Health Administration (VHA) inpatient and outpatient services. ACSI is the nation’s only cross-industry measure of customer satisfaction, providing benchmarking between the public and private sectors.

In 2013, the overall ACSI satisfaction index for VA was 84 for inpatient care and 82 for outpatient care, which compares favorably with the U.S. hospital industry (scores of 80 and 83, respectively). Since 2004, the ACSI survey has consistently shown that Veterans give VA hospitals and clinics a higher customer satisfaction score, on average, than patients give private sector hospitals. These overall scores are based on specific feedback on customer expectations, perceived value and quality, responsiveness to customer complaints,

and customer loyalty. One signature finding for 2013 is the continuing high degree of loyalty to VA among Veterans, with a score of 93 percent favorable. This score has remained high (above 90 percent) for the past ten years.

“Every day, our dedicated VA employees, many of whom are Veterans themselves, strive to provide millions of Veterans with the excellent care they have earned and deserve,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. “Our Nation’s Veterans deserve the best care, and the ACSI survey results help us better understand how Veterans feel about their overall health care experience at VA. There is always more work to do, and we are focused on continuous improvement to the care we provide.” Additionally, Veterans strongly endorsed VA health care, with 91 percent offering positive assessments of inpatient care and 92 percent for outpatient care. When asked if they would use a VA medical center the next time they need inpatient care or outpatient care, Veterans overwhelmingly indicated they would (96 and 95 percent, respectively).

Veterans also responded positively to questions related to customer service for both

VA inpatient care (92 percent favorable) and outpatient care (91 percent). Medical providers and appointment personnel were considered highly courteous with scores of 92 and 91, respectively. Additionally, VA medical providers ranked high in professionalism (90 percent positive).

“VA’s strategy of providing a personalized, proactive, patient-driven approach to health care is positively impacting Veterans’ experiences at our 1700 sites of care nationwide,” said Dr. Robert A. Petzel, VA’s Under Secretary for Health. “We are transitioning to a health service focused on Veterans’ personal health care goals, and this is reflected in the ACSI score.” With over eight million Veterans enrolled, VA operates the largest integrated health care delivery system in the United States. Our mission is to honor America’s Veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being. VA provides a broad range of primary care, specialized care, and related medical and social support services. VA provided 89.7 million outpatient visits last fiscal year. VA has 236,000 health care appointments per day.



# THE ROARING Twenties

## Hines Honors Volunteers



More than 230 volunteers were recongnized at the annual volunteer award ceremony held on April 10. The Roaring 20's Speakeasy theme was a celebration of 149,353 hours of service performed by 1081 enthusiastic volunteers in fiscal year 2013. Thanks to the dapper guys and gals who joined the celebration. For more information about becoming a volunteer at Hines, call (708) 202-2523.

(Photos by Daniel DuVerney, Hines Media Service)

## VA Peer Specialists Held in High Regard by Veterans

by John Crawford  
VA Research Communications

Recovery from mental illness is often possible. That's the goal of VA's peer specialist mental health program—to have Veterans who have recovered from mental illness serve as role models for other Veterans. The concept is simple: Veterans will connect better with those who have experienced the same things.

A recent survey conducted by VA researchers in Syracuse, N.Y., and Pittsburgh, along with colleagues at the RAND Corporation, showed the achievements, and difficulties, of hiring Veterans with serious mental illnesses. The findings, published in the Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal, pointed to widespread success and some room for improvement.

*VA is largest employer of mental health peer specialists*

VA has employed peer specialists for mental health since 2005 and is, in fact, their largest single employer in the world.

The program expanded dramatically when President Obama signed an order in 2012 to improve mental health care for Veterans. That led to VA hiring more than 900 peer specialists nationwide to help treat Veterans with mental illness.

Ninety-two of VA's 138 Local Recovery Coordinators, or LRCs, responded to a 2010 survey asking them about the peer specialist program. The LRCs, who are generally psychologists or social workers, were asked to rate the difficulty and effectiveness of hiring, training and employing peer specialists and to gauge their impact on care.

Seventy percent of the respondents said peer specialists had been hired at their site. Virtually all were familiar with the program. Over half of the LRCs who worked with peer specialists reported that implementation was going well. The most frequent response on the survey was that the Veterans held the peer specialists in "high regard." They were having a positive impact on care and were of great assistance.

Unfortunately some respondents couldn't define exactly what the peer specialists should be doing. In a few facilities, coordinators felt the peer specialists weren't being used enough.

*Research yields suggestions to improve training*

Another topic that came up was training. Peer specialists currently undergo training, ranging from 40 to 80 hours, just to be certified. Topics include, for example, how to use your story as a recovery tool and how to listen effectively. Based on the survey responses, the researchers suggested that integrating the LRCs into the training process and allowing them to tailor the content based on need and location would further enhance the program's effectiveness and ensure everyone involved understands his or her role.

When it came to care, responses were overwhelmingly positive. Peer specialists were seen as role models, showing it is possible to cope successfully with mental illness, and in some cases, to recover. Wrote the study authors, "PS were reported to provide hope and an extra resource for Veterans."



*As a Peer Support Specialist, Hines Veteran Michael Roland is part of a unique cadre of people joining VA's mental health care teams. Peer Support Specialists are Veterans who have successfully dealt with their own mental health recovery for a minimum of one year and successfully completed a program of training and certification.*

HOW **do I**  
GET INVOLVED  
with MY own  
HEALTH CARE?

[www.veteranshealthlibrary.com](http://www.veteranshealthlibrary.com)

My healthvet

VETERANS,  
celebrate 10 YEARS  
of ONLINE ACCESS to  
VA HEALTH CARE

Get online today @  
[www.MyHealth.va.gov](http://www.MyHealth.va.gov)

Access your health information 24/7

My HealtheVet

e-Donate!

E-Donate is an online donation option at <http://www.hines.va.gov> that provides community members who wish to give back to Veterans at the hospital a simple and safe way to pledge their support to the fund of their choice.

For additional information, contact Hines Voluntary Service at (708) 202-2523.





Think Spring



## WORD ON THE STREET

*What do you like most about Springtime?*



The flowers, and that I get to walk outside

-Sharel Aldridge  
PAS



Baseball! Let's play ball!

-Albert Poellnitz  
FMS



I like that spring is a new beginning.

-Dr. Peter Letarte  
Neurosurgery



I like the smell of fresh-cut grass in the spring.

-Raymond Shepack  
Veteran



The ability to get out and talk to people who were hibernating all winter.

-Darrell Daley  
Police Service



The ability to be outside, have a window open to have some fresh air, and sunshine.

-Martin Anderson  
EMS



The absence of cold!

-Eduard Caro  
Decision Support (VISN 12)



The smell of the spring rain. It puts you in a very peaceful mood.

-Kitty Thomas  
Nursing Service

## Hines Back in the Day



American Red Cross volunteers at Hines (Photo donated to Hines VAH)

"TRIATHLON" CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3  
triathlon goes in both directions," said Gemmell. "Triathlon is very challenging and so is working toward housing homeless Veterans. You collect all the resources you need to accomplish your goal, but things happen that slow you down, distract, and frustrate you. When obstacles arise, you deal with them the best way you can and keep moving forward toward the finish line. Then, at the end, when you have crossed the line all the struggle and trial is worth it! During the times of greatest struggle in a race I draw on the inspiration of my fellow Vets and people I have met battling cancer to remind myself of what a privilege it is to be healthy enough to do what I love."

Gemmell looks forward to racing in several other events this season and hopes to be just as successful.



## PACT Teams Improve Access, Vet Satisfaction

WASHINGTON -- The Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) Patient Aligned Care Teams (PACTs), VA's model for more personalized and accessible primary care delivery, is improving access to health care and Veteran satisfaction, according to data released today by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Since its inception in 2010, the PACT program has transformed the way Veterans receive their care by offering a coordinated team approach squarely focused on Veterans' wellness and disease prevention.

"Every day, VA works to provide Veterans access to the high-quality health care

they have earned and deserve," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. "PACTs provide the right combination of health care professionals to develop a personalized health plan for each Veteran and deliver care conveniently at primary care clinics and through new eHealth options. Through PACTs, VA is achieving more personalized, proactive and patient-driven care. As a result, Veterans are increasingly more satisfied with their care."

VA is the largest integrated health care system in the United States, caring for approximately 5.3 million Veterans in primary care settings. Over the past two

years, VA has bolstered its support to all medical centers to expand established PACTs. Teams are comprised of a provider, a Registered Nurse care manager, a clinical associate, and an administrative associate. Clinical pharmacists, social workers, nutritionists, and behavioral health staff support PACTs.

Since implementing PACTs, the number of primary care patients has increased 12 percent, and the number of encounters with Veterans has increased 50 percent mostly due to telehealth, telephone and group encounters. Communicating with health care professionals through secure electronic means has increased dramatically as well. Despite the increase of primary care patients, access to primary care has improved and continuity of care is better. Additionally, approximately 65 percent of Veterans requesting a same day primary care appointment with their personal provider are accommodated and 78 percent of Veterans are able to see their own primary care provider for an appointment on the date they desire. Veteran access to primary care during extended hours (non-business hours) has increased 75 percent since January 2013.



SEE "PACT" ON PAGE 13



# HINES "MONTH IN REVIEW" PHOTOS



George Isdale, from the Disabled American Veterans, presented Hines Director Joan Ricard a generous donation for the Veterans at Hines on May 1.



Hines staff participated in the Native American Indian Earth Day popcorn fundraiser on April 24.



Hines employees attended the Town Hall meeting in the Auditorium on May 1.



Hines Nurses Mary LaMasters-Valadka (left) and Judy Alexander-Garvey (right) provided information at the Nursing and Partnership Excellence display on April 7.



Hines staff participated in Teal, Denim and Photo Day on April 25 in support of Sexual Assault Awareness Month.



Employees from the Hines Blind Rehabilitation Center spoke to children who participated in the Hines Bring Your Child to Work Day on April 24.



Hines employees helped raise awareness for Sexual Assault during an F-Lobby event on April 2.



# Low Testosterone: What Type of Impact Can it Have on Men

By Tim Cresson, PharmD Candidate 2014  
Aurora CBOC

Testosterone is mainly produced by the Leydig cells in the testes. It is derived from cholesterol and can be converted to estrogens by further reactions (too much conversion to estrogens is one way in which testosterone can become low). In healthy men, production peaks in the mid-20s and declines by 0.2-2% per year. This decrease is usually just a normal part of the aging process for most men, but can also come from excessive stress, obesity, smoking, or excessive BPA, phthalate, or organophosphate exposure. Dehydroepiandrosterone (DHEA) is a hormone secreted by the adrenal glands that is converted to testosterone in body tissues and supplements the Leydig cells' production.

Approximately 30% of men over the age of 60 have clinically low serum testosterone levels (< 300 ng/dL). Although the link to increased mortality has not been completely demonstrated as of yet, low testosterone can lead to development of other conditions such as diabetes, osteoporosis, and cardiovascular disease.

Symptoms of low testosterone present around age 40 and tend to be somewhat vague. They can include: decrease in muscle mass, decrease in pubic/axillary hair, irritability, hot flashes, increased body fat,

low energy, and decreased sexual drive. Changes in a man's body shape, mood, libido, and strength over a period of time are key factors in coming up with the diagnosis. Because of the association between low testosterone and other endocrine disorders like diabetes, it recommended that screenings take place more frequently than in otherwise healthy patients.

Zinc has been shown to be low in men with low testosterone.

Saw Palmetto works by decreasing the conversion of testosterone to the more potent dihydrotestosterone (DHT), which exhibits most of its effects on the prostate and reproductive system. Blocking this conversion means that there is more testosterone present to contribute to other body systems like the musculature.

Testosterone can be prescribed as an extended-release injection (cypionate; propionate; enanthate), a topical preparation such as a cream or gel (AndroGel, Testim, Fortesta, Axiron, Androderm), or as a buccal system that is placed on the gum line (Striant). All products work by directly increasing testosterone concentration in the body, which helps to alleviate symptoms. Side effects of testosterone therapy are generally mild and include decreased sperm count, slight rise in PSA, prostatitis, acne, and arthralgia.

## RECOGNITION INFO CORNER



### On-the-Spot Awards:

The On-the-Spot awards program was established and is supported by the Director's Office. The program is intended to provide immediate recognition to employees who make contributions in support of the VA mission, organizational goals and objectives, and VA's Strategic Plan. In April, each Service was given their allotment of "On-The-Spot" Awards for issuance. A grand total of 783 awards are waiting to be issued. Employees will receive \$50 in their paycheck for each on-the-spot award approved. Employees and supervisors can nominate employees for this special recognition. It's a way of saying thanks to employees who make a difference.

You can find more information on this program in VA Policy Memorandum 578-12-005-64, On-the-Spot Awards.

# EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT!

## Welcome to Hines!



Abdillahi Abdinoor, Medicine  
Juan Angelats, Surgery  
Alyssa Appel, Research  
Benjamin Auliff, Medicine  
Trisha Barnes, Nursing  
Sandra Biernacki, Medicine  
Joaquin Borromeo, N&FS  
Lohith Bose, Surgery  
Daniel Bowlby, N&FS  
Tina Butcher-Johnson, PAS  
Gerald Coble, PAS  
Ramiro De Oca, FMS  
Daniel Durnen, N&FS  
Cheryl Gerdes, PAS  
Sarada Grandhi, OI&T  
William Greenlee, Imaging  
Anna Gron, Nursing  
Xavier Hagerman, PAS  
Jimmy Hart, FMS  
Eileen Hurn, Nursing  
Craig Ing, Rehabilitation  
Anita Jones, Mental Health  
Darrel Kelley, PAS

Chelsea Kindler, Rehabilitation  
Marta Lopez, Imaging  
Wallace Marshall, EMS  
Jason May, HR  
Phillip McClellan, FMS  
Kim McCoy, Education  
Amlia Merz, Mental Health  
Alexandra Morocco, Mental Health  
Carl Newman, Surgery  
Erin Newsom, Mental Health  
Jessy Nirappil, Medicine  
Alicia Page, Pharmacy  
Tamar Paine, Nursing  
Katherine Parungao, Mental Health  
Harry Platt, Imaging  
Agapito Rodriguez, FMS  
Fred Rothenberger, Medicine  
Ralph Simpson, EMS  
Marta Tancula, OI&T  
Susan Vaughan, Neurology  
Celeste Villamin, Nursing  
Andre Walton, FMS  
Paige Webber, Mental Health



## Farewell Retirees!

Sharon Zandell, Education

## Congratulations to the Hines Women of the Year!

Lovette Parks (left), from Patient Administration Service, was named the Hines Woman of the Year in the GS-8 and below category and Mary Beth Harrison (right), from the Blind Rehabilitation Center, was named the Hines Woman of the Year in the GS-9 and above category. Congratulations to these two women who have gone above and beyond in their performance!





**“PACT” CONTINUED FROM PG 8**

Over 72 percent of all Veterans discharged from VA are contacted within two days to ensure they are following discharge instructions and check in on their condition. These critical post-discharge follow-ups are important to reducing readmissions.

Mental Health Integration is also a critical component of PACTs and the program’s goal to provide coordinated care. Veterans now see mental health providers in the primary care setting. In just one year (FY12-FY13) using the PACTs model, mental health services offered in VA primary care clinics increased 18 percent.

Overall, PACTs program implementation has been associated with important utilization changes—fewer primary care patients are receiving care in urgent care settings (decreased 33 percent) and acute hospital admissions have decreased 12 percent due to improved care management and coordination from PACTs.

Equally important, both rural and urban Veterans report a high level of satisfaction with VA services. Veterans also indicated they are more likely to recommend treatment at a VA facility than at non-VA facilities. This positive feedback is consistent with the 2013 American Customer Satisfaction Index, which reported that Veterans strongly endorse VA health care, with 91 percent offering positive assessments of inpatient care and 92 percent for outpatient care.

The PACT model has allowed VA to create COMPASS—a dashboard program which extracts and derives these types of metrics and information from multiple VA sources to track the status of the implementation.

“Our PACTs outcomes to date support VA’s ongoing health care transition to a health system focused on a personalized approach to care. We seek to help every Veteran achieve his or her unique health goals,” said Dr. Robert A. Petzel, VA’s Under Secretary for Health.

More information is available at <http://www.va.gov/health/>.



Veterans Health Administration | Office of Health Information

*Do You See Non-VA Health Care Providers?*

Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record (VLER) Health

*Coming Soon to Hines!*

*What is VLER Health?*

VLER Health is a program that shares certain parts of your health care record between the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Department of Defense (DoD), and selected private health care providers over a secure network known as the **Nationwide Health Information Network**.

*Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)*

**Is the information secure?**  
Yes. The information is sent securely through the Internet using the Nationwide Health Information Network.

**What is the difference between VLER Health and My HealtheVet?**  
VLER Health allows VA health care providers to share medical information with DoD and selected private health care providers. My HealtheVet will allow Veterans to create a personal health record for your own use.

**How often do I have to update my permission to share my health information?**  
At this time, your signed authorization form is good for 5 years.

*Why is VLER Health Important to You?*

Three out of four Veterans receive a portion of their care from non-VA health care providers. Sharing certain parts of your electronic health record will help reduce the need for patients and families to carry records between health care providers. It will also allow your private health care provider to make informed decisions about your care.

*Congratulations to the following Hines employees who were nominated for a 2014 Federal Employee of the Year award!*

Nominee	Service	Category
William Baxter, Erin Silanskis, James Seminaroti, Tanya Smith-Jeffries, Tracy Banks, Donald Donahue, Corinne Steimer, Deborah Strzok, Pamela Wilson, Maria Barsellotti, Thomas Deegan, Ralph Romero, Beth Ann Elliot, Tony Wilson, Janelle Suber, Dennis Dobrydina, Laurie Boskovich, Emily Ritter, Tina Ruskuls, Samantha Tepper, Katherine Gemmell, Jordan Wolf, Gregory Kirschling, Quincey Kyles, Erin Vondrasek, Mary Bellmo, Meggan McFarlane, Lolita Drummond, Sonya Ebhotemen, Mark Hollins, Peter, Chien, LaDonna Davis, Janice Onnezi, Patrick Markam, Trevis Vaughn, Manny Villarreal, Gregory Fayne, Rochelle Michkey, Judith Alexander-Garvey, Robert Petersen, Cris Mabrito	Healthcare for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) Program	Agency of the Year Nomination
T. Christopher Little, Cecilia Beuprie, Florence O'Leary, Christopher Beattie, Christina Kapteyn	Hines Green Team	Federal Green Challenge for the Category of Education and Outreach
Bruce Roberts	Mental Health Service Line Manager	JFK Leadership Excellence Award
Barbara Janczy	RN, RCF	Outstanding Professional Employee
Maruja Cruz	RN, ECC	Outstanding Professional Employee
Robin Metz	CAN, CLC	Outstanding Professional Employee
Padmaja Sattu	Aurora CBOC	Outstanding Professional Employee
Surrina Hamb	Outreach, MMU	Outstanding Administrative/Clerical Support Employee
Cris Mabrito	Outreach, MMU	Outstanding Community Service Employee
Beth Scott	RN, Rheumatology and Renal	Outstanding Professional Employee
Brian Schmitt	MD, Medicine Service Line	Outstanding Professional Employee
Charles Riva	Physical Therapist	Outstanding Professional Employee
Colleen Novak	HSS, Quality and Systems Improvement	Outstanding Professional Employee
Denise Van Vossen	KT, Cardiac Rehab	Outstanding Professional Employee
Elizabeth Krzeminski	RN, CLC	Outstanding Professional Employee
Jevon Johnson	SWS, Aurora CBO	Outstanding Professional Employee
Jonessa Farano, NP	Medical Subspecialty Clinic	Outstanding Professional Employee
Lena Houang	Pharmacy	Outstanding Professional Employee
Listianingsih (Lily) Hariman	PMR	Outstanding Professional Employee
Maria Filippi	RN, SCI	Outstanding Professional Employee
Megan Bracamontes	Oak Lawn CBOC	Outstanding Professional Employee
Rita (Stella) Hutton	National Program Consult, Blind Rehab Services	Outstanding Professional Employee
Thomas Daum	MD, Aurora/Elgin CBOCs	Outstanding Professional Employee
Vita Goldenberg	RN, Elgin CBOC	Outstanding Professional Employee
Michael Bradado	LPN, Elgin CBOC	Outstanding Professional Employee
Emi Cummings	Program Specialist, Surgery Service	Outstanding Program Specialist Employee
Paula Roychaudhuri	HSS, Patient Care Services	Outstanding Program Specialist Employee
Tiffany Richmond	Program Specialist	Outstanding Program Specialist Employee
Cristine Mabrito, Ryan Landi, Tyler Goodwine, Surrina Hamb, Robert Peterson, Susan Merritt	Hines Mobile Medical Unit (MMU)	Outstanding Public Service Team
Ann Werner, Pamela Coyner-Bruno, Cherry Felton, Cassandra Weems	Aurora PACT Teamlet 3	Outstanding Public Service Team
Anita Bor-Brown, Bhalvi Patel, Mary McCabe, Sung Ahn, Susan Adeli, Renita Howard, Valerie Wodzinski, Vansa Kamar, Kathy Clancy, Carol Gouty	Hines Falls Patient Safety Team	Outstanding Safety Team
Patricia McCoy, Colleen Novak, Valerie Wodzinski, Helen Schneider, John Bailey, Chris Wirtjes, Ryan Landi, Liz Mirabella	Hines Patient Safety Team	Outstanding Safety Team
Jean Sneed	Hines Safety/FMS/OIT Service Team	Outstanding Safety Team
Christopher Beattie, Dandrea Adams, Bruce Burrell, Anthony Ancona, Mike MaMahon, Tom Kotulski, Michael Halm, Martin Muth, Lawrence Koniecki, William Hanley, Michael McCrary		
Maggie Ross, Doris Powledge, Robin Metz, Marcia Watson, Delia Flores	CLC-1C Nursing Assistants/Healthcare Technicians	Outstanding Safety Team
Amanda Kalins	SWS Supervisor	Outstanding Supervisor
Eleanor Tan	CNM, 7th floor	Outstanding Supervisor
Fred Jackson	PAS, Chief Inpatient Care and Processing	Outstanding Supervisor
Marivic Gregorio	RN, Quality and Systems Improvement	Outstanding Supervisor
Mary Beth Harrison	Assistant Chief, Blind Rehab Services	Outstanding Supervisor
Mary Muth	PAS, MSA Supervisor	Outstanding Supervisor
Philip Chiaramonte	KT Supervisor, PMR	Outstanding Supervisor
Mark Powell	Veteran Canteen Services	Outstanding Technical/Program Support Employee
Richard Yau	Physical Therapist	Outstanding Technical/Program Support Employee





# WHAT'S NEW IN CONSTRUCTION?

## Current Projects

PROJECT	ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE
Construct smoking shelter, Building 217	June 2014
Renovate hospital front entrance	Summer 2014
Renovate operating room	Summer 2014
Replace transformer by F-lobby	Summer 2014
Renovate PAS and Emergency Preparedness, Building 1	July 2015

## Upcoming Projects

PROJECT	ESTIMATED START DATE
North Parking Lot B and SCI Parking Lot repaving	May 2014
Construct E85 filling station	May 2014
Renovate Building 228, Mental Health	October 2014
Repair and insulate Building 200 exterior (Façade replacement)	October 2014

\* Denotes construction complete but activation/opening still pending.

## Where's the Hines Mobile Medical Unit?

### Morris, Ill.

May 5, 2014  
212 W. Washington Street  
9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

### Kankakee, Ill.

May 7, 2014  
Parking lot at the corner of Court and Schuyler  
9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

### St. Charles, Ill.

May 13, 2014  
311 N. Second Street  
9 a.m. - 2 p.m.



To schedule the Hines Mobile Medical Unit for a Veteran-focused event, contact Cris Mabrito, Hines Outreach Coordinator, at (708) 202-8387 ext. 20011 or email her at [cris.mabrito@va.gov](mailto:cris.mabrito@va.gov).

# DID YOU KNOW?

## Dealing With Stress, Anxiety, and Depression

Stress, anxiety, and depression can get in the way of your health. If coping becomes difficult, VA is here to help. Talk with your primary care provider.

Here are some self-management coping tips::

### Change Your Thinking

• Your mood (sad, nervous, stressed, etc.) comes from your thoughts and what you tell yourself. In most cases, you can control your mood by choosing what you think about and what you tell yourself.

• When you are feeling too much stress, be aware of what you are thinking. Are these thoughts making you feel worse? If so, then replace them with more positive thoughts.

### Help Your Body Handle Stress

• Your mood affects your body, and vice versa... Taking care of your body will improve your outlook.

### Be Active

• Make physical activity a part of every day.  
• Listen to or make music, paint, or express yourself artistically.  
• Take the time to do things you enjoy!

### Eat Wisely

• Eat a healthy diet high in vegetables and fruits.  
• Drink plenty of water.  
• Avoid managing your mood with unhealthy foods or overeating.

### Reduce your Stress

• Get enough rest.  
• Try a massage.  
• Take a long shower or bath.  
• Talk over your troubles with someone you trust.

*"To care for him who shall  
have borne the battle,*

# VA

*and for his widow, and his  
orphan"*



Veterans Health Administration  
**Research & Development**  
Improving Veterans' Lives - [www.research.va.gov](http://www.research.va.gov)



## HINES VAH & LOVELL FHCC

## RESEARCH DAY

MAY 20, 2014

INNOVATIVE AND CUTTING EDGE RESEARCH

On Display

In the Edward Hines Jr. VA Hospital Auditorium

10:30-2:00 pm  
11:00-11:30 pm  
11:30 -12:00 pm  
12:00-2:00 pm  
2:00-3:30 pm

Exhibits and Informational Tables  
Middleton Award Presentation  
Keynote Speaker  
Poster Presentation Session  
Afternoon Speakers Session

Refreshments Served



## **VETERANS Stand Down**

The 2014 Summer Stand Down for Homeless Veterans will be held May 30-31!

Voluntary Service will be accepting clothing donations between the dates of April 1 and May 23.

Only the following gently used items will be accepted for both men and women: blue jeans, slacks, sweatshirts, light jackets, dress and casual shirts. All clothing must be clean.

In addition, the following new items are requested: underwear (briefs), athletic socks, tennis shoes, t-shirts.

Clothing will be accepted until May 23rd.

For more information, contact Voluntary Service at (708) 202-22523.



**May 21st**  
**11 a.m. - 1 p.m.**

Community members, Veterans, and VA employees are encouraged to participate in the Hines VA2K Walk/Run. This is not a race, and everyone is welcome to walk or roll the approximately 1.2 mile event. The VA2K encourages people of all fitness levels to embrace healthy lifestyle choices that sustain and improve health and well-being.

Participants have the option to donate food and clothing for homeless Veterans. More than 25,000 people at 170 VA facilities took part in VA2K last year. Donations totaled more than \$300,000. With your help, we hope to help even more Veterans.

# Hines CBOCs

Hines currently operates six Community Based Outpatient Clinics (CBOCs), which are local, outpatient primary care clinics, to make access to healthcare easier. The clinics offer a variety of services including women's healthcare, laboratory services, retinal imaging, pharmacy and nutrition consultations, home-based primary care, group health education and mental health services. Some locations offer specialty care to include audiology assessments and hearing aid repair, physical therapy and rehabilitation, as well as geriatric care.

### **Aurora CBOC**

161 South Lincolnway  
North Aurora, IL 60542  
Phone: 630-859-2504

### **Elgin CBOC**

450 W. Dundee Rd.  
Elgin, IL 60123  
Phone: 847-742-5920  
Fax: 847-742-6124

### **Joliet CBOC**

1201 Eagle St  
Joliet, IL 60432  
Phone: 815-740-8100  
Fax: 815-740-8101

### **Kankakee CBOC**

581 William Latham Drive, Suite 301  
Bourbonnais, IL 60914-2435  
Phone: 815-932-3823  
Fax: 815-932-3827

### **LaSalle CBOC**

4461 N Progress Blvd  
Peru, IL 61354  
Phone: 815-223-9678  
Fax: 815-223-9683

### **Oak Lawn CBOC**

10201 S. Cicero  
Oak Lawn, IL 60453  
Phone: 708-499-3675  
Fax: 708-499-3715

# Upcoming Events and Observances

## April 2014

Alcohol Awareness Month		Cancer Control Month	
National Occupational Therapy Month		Parkinson's Awareness Month	
Sexual Assault Awareness Month		Stress Awareness Month	
1-7	Testicular Cancer Awareness Week	15	Tax Day
6-13	National Volunteer Week	16	National Health Care Decisions Day
7-13	National Public Health Week	16	National Stress Awareness Day
9	National Former POW Recognition Day	20	Easter Sunday
10	Bataan Death March Anniversary (1942)	22	Earth Day
11	National Alcohol Screening Day	24	Administrative Professionals Day
13	Palm Sunday	25	Arbor Day
13-19	National Library Week	25	Malaria Awareness Day
14	Passover begins at Sundown	27	Holocaust Remembrance Day

## May 2014

Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month		High Blood Pressure Awareness Month	
National Mental Health Month		Arthritis Awareness Month	
Lupus Awareness Month		Oncology Nursing Month	
2	National Day of Prayer	11-17	National Women's Health Week
4-10	Public Service Recognition Week	11-17	National Hospital Week
6	World Asthma Day	14	Receptionists Day
6-12	National Nurses Week	15	National Employee Health and Fitness Day
8	Red Cross Day	21	Hines VA2K Run/Walk
9	Military Spouse Appreciation Day	21	American Red Cross Founded (1881)
10	World Lupus Day	26	Memorial Day (Observed)
11	Mother's Day	29	National Senior Health and Fitness Day

## June 2014

National Safety Month		Professional Wellness Month	
Vision Research Month		Cataract Awareness Month	
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Pride Month		National Scleroderma Awareness Month	
1	Heimlich Maneuver Introduced (1974)	15	Father's Day
1	National Cancer Survivors Day	21	Summer Begins
1-7	National Headache Awareness Week	21	Battle of Okinawa Ended (1945)
5	World Environment Day	22	GI Bill Signed into Law (1944)
6	D-Day Anniversary (1944)	25	Korean War Began (1950)
9-15	Men's Health Week	26	United Nations Charter Signed (1945)
14	U.S. Army Established (1775)	27	National HIV Testing Day
14	Flag Day		





DEPARTMENT	BUILDING	FLOOR/ROOM
Admissions	200	1st Floor
Audiology	228	1112
Auditorium	9	1st Floor
Blind Rehabilitation Center	113	1st Floor
Cafeteria	45	1st Floor
Chapel	200	C101
Compensated Work Therapy	13	3rd Floor
Compensation and Pension	12	2nd Floor
Credit Union	1	A133
Dental Clinic	200	12th Floor
Diabetes Clinic	200	4th Floor
Dialysis Clinic	200	6th Floor
Emergency Department	200	1st Floor
ENT Clinic	228	1112
Extended Care Center	217	1st Floor
Eye Clinic	200	A153
Eye Diagnostic Lab	200	C129
GU Clinic	200	B020
Geriatric Outpatient Clinic	217	1st Floor
Human Resources	17	1st Floor
Imaging (CT Scan, MRI, Ultrasound)	200	C105
Laboratory/Blood Draw	200	D110
Lost and Found	200	A126
Mental Health Outpatient Clinics	228	1st - 4th Floor
Mental Health Outpatient Clinics	13	All Floors
Non-VA Medical Care	9	101
Nuclear Medicine	1	G201
OEF/OIF/OND Program	228	1029
Optical Clinic	228	1051
Patient Advocate Office	228	1055
Patient Education Resource Center	1	G100
Patient Financial Services	1	E131
Pharmacy	200	B128
Post Office	45	Atrium
Prosthetics	228	5th Floor
Radiation Therapy	200	Basement
Rehabilitation Therapy Clinics	228	Basement
Residential Care Facility	221	1st Floor
Spinal Cord Injury/Disorder Clinic	128	1st Floor
Sub-specialty Outpatient Clinics	200	4th Floor
Surgical Outpatient Clinics	200	5th Floor
Voluntary Service	9	1st Floor
Women's Health Center	200	12th Floor
X-ray	200	D101A